

Celebrating Jazz Centennial: Artists born in 1926

Other Notable 1926 Births

George Martin, Andy Griffith, Mel Brooks, Julie London, Chuck Berry, Joan Sutherland, Big Mama Thornton, Marilyn Monroe, Bill Black, Morton Feldman

Bucky Pizzarelli (01/09/1926 - 04/01/2020)

- American jazz guitarist
- born in Paterson, NJ
- Worked for NBC as a staff musician in 1952 with Skitch Henderson (and later Doc Sever; became member of *The Tonight Show* Band (with Johnny Carson) and later moved to ABC for the *Dick Cavett Show*
- Collaborated with Benny Goodman, George Barnes, Les Paul, Oscar Peterson, Stéphane Grappelli, Benny Green, and Antônio Carlos Jobim.
- Cited as influences Django Reinhardt, Freddie Green, Charlie Christian, George Van Eps (inventor of 7-string guitar), Joe Mooney (blind accordion player),
- learned to play guitar and banjo at an early age
- joined Vaughn Monroe dance band in 1944
- Inspired by George Van Eps, he started playing the seven-string guitar in 1969

Education

- musical education heavily influenced by his family, particularly his uncles, who were professional musicians
- did not pursue extensive formal jazz education; believed that many modern musicians were over-trained
- received an Honorary Doctorate from Hamilton College in 2003

Awards

- received MAC Awards Lifetime Achievement Award in 2002
 - Manhattan Association of Cabarets & Clubs
- received ASCAP Jazz Wall of Fame in 2005
- New Jersey Hall of Fame Inductee for Arts & Entertainment in 2011
- "The Artisan Guitar Show Bucky Pizzarelli" annual award was created in 2022

Fun Facts

- originally used the stage name "Johnny Buck"
- played with Tiny Tim on *The Tonight Show* (after tuning his ukulele) on the day that Tiny Tim married Miss Vicki on the show
- He played on hundreds of recordings — including some landmarks, like Roberta Flack's "The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face" and Ray Charles' "Georgia On My Mind." He can also be heard backing teen heartthrobs Frankie Avalon and Fabian; pop vocal group Dion & The Belmonts; and Brian Hyland, on the 1960 novelty smash "Itsy Bitsy Teenie Weenie Yellow Polka Dot Bikini."
- Asked in his mid-eighties by writer George Cole about his approach to music, Pizzarelli replied, "Every day I get up and I try to correct what I screwed up the night before!"

Discography¹

34 as leader
44 as side player

Selected Songs

- Moonglow (2005?): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NNDI5qsTWD0>
 - with Frank Vignola
 - note 7 string guitar and bass line
- Tangerine (1972): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sWp6dAsjyNY>
 - Mary Pizzarelli – guitar (daughter)
 - George Duvivier – double bass
 - Don Lamond – drums
- Honeysuckle Rose (2002): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=36UBSUodBeg>
 - with John P. (son)
 - shows how good he is as accompanist

Melba Liston (01/13/1926 - 04/23/1999)

- American jazz trombonist, arranger, and composer
- born in Kansas City, MO
- She was the first woman trombonist to play alongside men in big bands during the 1940s and 1960s, but as her career progressed she became better known as an arranger, particularly in partnership with pianist Randy Weston.
- Other major artists with whom she worked include Coleman HAWkins, Kenny Dorham, Dizzy Gillespie, Billie Holiday, John Coltrane, and Count Basie
- primarily self-taught, but "encouraged by her guitar-playing grandfather", with whom she spent significant time learning to play spirituals and folk songs.
- She and Dexter Gordon began playing music together at the ages of fourteen and seventeen, respectively, and she recorded with Gordon in 1947. When Wilson disbanded his orchestra in 1948, Liston joined Dizzy Gillespie's big band in New York, which included saxophonists John Coltrane, Paul Gonsalves, and pianist John Lewis
- her innovative jazz arrangements legitimized her presence in a very male-dominated environment.
- She toured with Count Basie, then with Billie Holiday (1949) but was so profoundly affected by the indifference of the audiences and the rigors of the road that she gave up playing and turned to education. Liston taught for about three years.
- Liston returned to Gillespie for tours sponsored by the U.S. State Department in 1956 and 1957, recorded with Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers (1957), and formed an all-women quintet in 1958. In 1959, she visited Europe with the show Free and Easy, for which accompanied Quincy Jones was the music director. She Billy Eckstine with the Quincy Jones Orchestra
- In the late 1950s, she began collaborating with pianist Randy Weston, [13] arranging compositions (primarily his own) for mid-size to large ensembles. This association, especially strong in the 1960s, would be rekindled in the late 1980s and 1990s until her death. Her work with Weston has been compared to the collaborations of Billy Strayhorn and Duke Ellington.
- In addition, she worked with Milt Jackson, Clark Terry, and Johnny Griffin, as well as working as an arranger for Ray Charles
- Her early work with the high-profile bands of Count Basie and Dizzy Gillespie shows a strong command of the big-band and bop idioms. She worked as an arranger for numerous recording companies, especially Motown, and arranged scores for dozens of high profile musicians, including Mary Lou Williams, and Gloria Lynne.
- Liston worked as a "ghost writer" during her career. According to one writer, "Many of the arrangements found in the Gillespie, Jones, and Weston repertoires were accomplished by Liston."

Education

- briefly attended Jefferson High School, where she interacted with emerging musicians like Dexter Gordon, before transferring to Polytechnic High School (both in L.A.)
- primarily self-taught; studied with a music teacher named Alma Hightower for three years

Awards

- named NEA Jazz Master in 1987
- inducted into Ertegun Jazz Hall of Fame (Jazz at Lincoln Center) in 2025

Fun Facts

- started playing trombone at age 7
- Principal moved her from 6th grade to 8th because she was so smart
- Started touring when she was 17 with Gerald Wilson's band
- was classmate of Dexter Gordon and friends with Eric Dolphy
- tired of touring and uninterested audiences, so taught for 3 years, took a clerical job for a while and worked as an extra in Hollywood, appearing with Lana Turner in *The Prodigal* (1955) [12] and in *The Ten Commandments* (1956).
- Billy Eckstine introduced her to Dizzy Gillespie: "He took me all through the place to Dizzy and he said, 'You want a job?' I said, 'I ain't got no clothes and I don't have no horn.' He was firing one of his trombone players and he said, 'You can have his costume, and I'll give you a baritone horn to play until you get yours.' And so I started on the baritone horn and a man's jacket and clothes on 'til I got my things. It was terrible! The music was fine. I didn't have no trouble worrying about that. Just looks and clothes and everything. I never did have trouble with music."

Discography¹

2 as leader or co-leader

60 as side player

Selected Songs

- My Reverie (1960) - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ojwANp_D_fE
 - with Quincy Jones band – her arrangement
- Babe's Blues (1958): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iiBHBSXVbpM>
 - Randy Weston - piano
 - Ray Copeland - trumpet
 - Melba Liston - trombone, arranger
 - Johnny Griffin - tenor saxophone
 - George Joyner - bass
 - Charlie Persip - drums
- You Don't Say (1959): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tvQ22UqrNwA>
 - Melba Liston – trombone, arranger
 - Bennie Green, Al Grey, Benny Powell – trombone
 - Slide Hampton – trombone, tuba
 - Kenny Burrell – guitar
 - Jamil Nasser – bass
 - Charlie Persip – drums

Randy Weston (04/06/1926 - 09/01/2022)

- American jazz pianist and composer
- raised in Brooklyn, NY
- His mother was from Virginia and his father was of Jamaican-Panamanian descent
- Weston's piano style owed much to Duke Ellington and Thelonious Monk,[2] whom he cited in a 2018 video as among pianists he counted as influences, as well as Count Basie, Nat King Cole and Earl Hines. Beginning in the 1950s, Weston worked often with trombonist and arranger Melba Liston.
- Drafted into the U.S. Army during World War II, Weston served three years from 1944, reaching the rank of staff sergeant, and was stationed for a year in Okinawa, Japan
- Among Weston's piano heroes were Count Basie, Nat King Cole, Art Tatum, Duke Ellington, and his cousin Wynton Kelly, but it was Thelonious Monk who made the biggest impact, as Weston described in a 2003 interview: "When I first heard Monk, I heard Monk with [14] Coleman Hawkins. When I heard Monk play, his sound, his direction, I just fell in love with it. I spent about three years just hanging out with Monk. I would pick him up in the car and bring him to Brooklyn and he was a great master because, for me, he put the magic back into the music."
- In 1951, retreating from the atmosphere of drug use common on the New York jazz scene, Randy Weston moved to Lenox, Massachusetts, in the Berkshires.
- Randy Weston was voted New Star Pianist in DownBeat magazine's International Critics' Poll of 1955.
- In the 1960s, Weston's music prominently incorporated African elements, as shown on the large-scale suite Uhuru Afrika (1960, with the participation of poet Langston Hughes) and Music from the New African Nations featuring the Highlife), the latter recorded in 1963, two years after Weston traveled for the first time to Africa, as part of a U.S. cultural exchange programme to (the contingent also including Langston Hughes, musicians Lagos, Nigeria [21] Lionel Hampton and and singers Nina Simone and Brock Peters)
- In 1972, he produced Blue Moses for CTI Records, a best-selling record on which he plays electric keyboard. As he explained in a July 2018 interview, "We were still living in Tangier, so my son and I came from Tangier to do the recording, but when I got there, Creed Taylor said his formula is electric piano. I was not happy with that, but it was my only hit record. People loved it."
- The Spirits of Our Ancestors (recorded 1991, released 1992), which featured arrangements by his long-time collaborator Melba Liston. The album contained new, expanded versions of many of his well-known pieces and featured an ensemble including some African musicians, with guests such as Gillespie and Dizzy Pharoah Sanders also contributing
- His most popular compositions include "Hi-Fly", which he said was inspired by his experience of being 6' 8" and looking down at the ground, "Little Niles", named for his son (who was later known as Azzedin), "African Sunrise", "Blue Moses", "The Healers", and [31] "Berkshire Blues".
- Ghanaian drummer Kofi Ghanaba (formerly known as Guy Warren),[39] whose composition "Love, the Mystery of..." Weston used as his theme for some 40 years.

Education

- studied classical piano as a child
- graduated from Boys High School in Brooklyn

Awards

- named an NEA Jazz Master in 2001
- nominated for 2 Grammys
- multiple DownBeat awards; inducted into DownBeat Hall of Fame in 2016
- received honorary Doctor of Music awards from New England Conservatory of Music, Colby College, Brooklyn College
- awarded the French *Order of Arts and Letters* in 1998

- awarded *King Mohammed VI's Honor* for commitment to Morocco's Gnawa Music Tradition

Fun Facts

- was cousins with Wynton Kelly
- He worked as a cook at the Music Inn in Lenox, Massachusetts, while performing at night
- first traveled to Nigeria in 1961 and later settled in Morocco, where he owned a nightclub
- his album 'Uhuru Afrika' was banned by the South African apartheid regime

Discography¹

57 as leader

2 as side player

Selected Songs

- Hi Fly (1985) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FRvZ6Tur9dk>
 - Randy Weston piano
 - Benny Bailey trumpet
 - Sahib Shihab baritone & soprano sax
 - Talib Kibwe alto & soprano sax & flute
 - Benny Powell trombone
 - George Lewis trombone
 - Clyde Lucas drums
 - Wilbur Little bass
 - Sam Kelly bongos
 - Hale Smith conductor
- Love, the Mystery of... (1974): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QPh60_JZ7fg
 - Billy Harper - tenor saxophone, flute
 - William Allen - bass
 - Don Moye - drums
 - Steve Berrios, congas, percussion

Bud Shank (05/27/1926 - 04/02/2009)

- American alto saxophonist and flautist (also played tenor and baritone)
- born in Dayton, OH
- He rose to prominence in the early 1950s playing lead alto and flute in Stan Kenton's Innovations in Modern Music Orchestra
- He spent the 1960s as a first-call studio musician in Hollywood.
- In the 1970s and 1980s, he performed regularly with the L. A. Four (guitarist Laurindo Almeida, bassist Ray Brown, and drummer Shelly Manne)
- In 1946, he worked with Charlie Barnet before moving on to Kenton and the West coast jazz scene, where he became very influential
- He also had a strong interest in world music, playing Brazilian-influenced jazz
- In 1958, he became the first American jazz musician to record in Italy, paving the way for Chet Baker and others
- helped to popularize both Latin-flavored and chamber jazz music, and performed with orchestras as diverse as the Royal Philharmonic, the New American Orchestra, and Duke Ellington.
- His world music collaborations continued in 1962, fusing jazz with Indian traditions in collaboration with Indian composer and sitar player Ravi Shankar
- Shank died at his home in Tucson, Arizona

Education

- attended University of North Carolina

Awards

- four-time winner of the coveted Most Valuable Player award from the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences

Fun facts

- most famous recording is probably the version of "Harlem Nocturne" used as the theme song in Mickey Spillane's Mike Hammer.
- next most famous is his alto flute solo on the song "California Dreamin'" recorded by the Mamas & the Papas in 1965.
- In 1958 and 1960, Shank provided the soundtracks for two Bruce Brown surf movies: *Slippery When Wet* and *Barefoot Adventure*.
- A documentary film about Shank, *Bud Shank: Against the Tide (Portrait of a Jazz Legend)* was released in 2008 and has been awarded four indie film awards.

Discography¹

82 as leader

106 as side player

Selected Songs

- Harlem Nocturne (1984?) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AYpZyv4bWtc>
- Bag of Blues (1956) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fYKOhjOtRyg>
 - Claude Williamson - piano
 - Don Prell - bass
 - Chuck Flores - drums

Urbie Green (08/08/1926 - 12/31/2018)

- American jazz trombonist
- born in Mobile, AL
- he was taught piano by his mother, learning jazz and popular tunes
- toured with jazz Woody Herman, Gene Krupa, Jan Savitt, and Frankie Carle.
- played on over 250 recordings and released more than twenty albums as a soloist
- born in Mobile, AL; began playing at age 12; inducted into the Alabama Jazz Hall of Fame in 1995.
- He listened to trombonists Tommy Dorsey, J. C. Higginbotham, Jack Jenney, Jack Teagarden, and Trummy Young, but said he was more influenced by the styles of Dizzy Gillespie, Charlie Parker, and Lester Young. His style was also influenced by the vocals of Perry Como and Louis Armstrong.
- began his music career at 15 and finished high school at the Hollywood Professional School in LA
- In 1947, he joined Gene Krupa's band.
- in 1950, he and his brother Jack became members of Woody Herman's Thundering Herd
- During the 1950s and 1960s he toured with Benny Goodman and led the Tommy Dorsey orchestra after Dorsey's death in 1956
- He has recorded with Gene Krupa, Woody Herman, Benny Goodman, Louis Armstrong, Count Basie, Leonard Bernstein, Frank Sinatra, Billie Holiday, Tony Bennett, Peggy Lee, Pearl Bailey, Ella Fitzgerald,

Miles Davis, Charlie Parker, Coleman Hawkins, Dizzy Gillespie, Barbara Steisand, Perry Como, Aretha Franklin, Quincy Jones, J.J. Johnson, Antonio Carlos Jobim, Burt Bacharach, Buck Clayton and Herbie Mann

Education

- took piano lessons from his mother
- completed high school at the Hollywood Professional School (L.A.)

Awards

- won DownBeat Critics Award in 1954
- nominated for Grammy in 1958
- elected into the Alabama Jazz Hall of Fame in 1995
- multiple winner of Most Valuable Player Award from the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences

Fun facts

- both older brothers also played trombone
- among the few players who commanded the high **tessitura** favored by Glenn Miller, Tommy Dorsey, and Jack Jenney with an agility that was not shown by these previous trombonists in their recordings.
tessitura is the most acceptable and comfortable vocal range for a given singer (or, less frequently, musical instrument). It is the range in which a given type of voice presents its best-sounding (or characteristic) timbre
- solos were highlights on Walter Wanderlay's *Beach Samba* and Herbie Mann
- created *Twenty One Trombones* album
- in the 1970s Green began making innovations with his instrument. He designed a signature mouthpiece for Jet Tone and collaborated with Martin Brass on practical improvements to trombone design, including modifications of the hand brace and slide, water valve, and finish. Urbie also began experimenting with the "Green Monster", a King trombone using a King Vox Amp pickup in the mouthpiece connected to an octave doubler and reverb unit. Some of his best recordings of the 70s were with Enoch Light and the Light Brigade, Dick Hyman, Maynard Ferguson and Doc Severinsen.
- seen and heard in the movie "The Benny Goodman Story",

Discography¹

22 as leader

220 as side player

Selected Songs

- Soft Winds (1956) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WF21hAMrAR0>
 - Urbie Green – trombone
 - John Carisi – trumpet, arranger
 - Joe Wilder, Nick Travis, Phil Sunkel, **Doc Severinsen** – trumpet
 - Chauncey Welsh, Jack Satterfield, Jack Green, Lou McGarity, Rex Peer – trombone
 - Bill Barber, Don Butterfield – tuba
 - Al Cohn, Ray Beckenstein – tenor saxophone
 - Sol Schlinger, Danny Bank – baritone saxophone
 - **Dave McKenna** – piano
 - Jack Lesberg, Vinnie Burke – bass
 - Osie Johnson – drums
- Here's That Rainy Day (21 Trombones) (1967) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8zGkRAtJQ9A>

Jack McDuff (09/17/1926 - 01/23/2001)

- American jazz organist and organ trio bandleader
- born in Champaign, IL
- born Eugene McDuffy, known professionally as "Brother" Jack McDuff or "Captain" Jack McDuff
- most prominent during the hard bop and soul jazz era of the 1960s
- McDuff began playing bass, appearing in Joe Farrell's group and later with Max Roach
 - "One night," McDuff relates, speaking by phone from his current home in Minneapolis, "Max Roach came to a club there. They played so long and so fast and when they got through they'd all walk off the stage, and the bass player, who'd been playing about 15 minutes already, has got to play 5 or 10 minutes more by himself. That ended my bass playing career. "That's when I started playing organ. I remember I went to a club and I asked a barmaid how to turn it on. She gave me that funny look like, 'You sure you're in the right place?'"
- in the late 1950s, McDuff moved to the organ and soon became a bandleader, leading groups featuring a young George Benson on guitar, Red Holloway on tenor saxophone and Joe Dukes on drums.
- Many of his albums became classics, including his debut solo *Brother Jack* in 1960 and *Brother Jack McDuff Live!* (1963), featuring Holloway and Benson (includes his biggest hit, "Rock Candy")
- Jimmy Smith was major influence on McDuff's style
- Jack McDuff played a pivotal role in the evolution of soul jazz after the 1960s, extending the Hammond B-3 organ's bluesy, groove-oriented sound into funkier territories that bridged hard bop's improvisational rigor with R&B-infused rhythms

Education

- studied privately in Cincinnati but mostly self-taught

Awards

- placed in the DownBeat readers' polls multiple times in the 1960s
- tied with Count Basie in DownBeat's 1966 international critics' poll

Fun facts

- Credited with giving guitarist George Benson his first break.
- largely self-taught on bass, piano, and organ
- besides George Benson, also featured and influenced guitarists Pat Martino and Grant Green
- Joey DeFrancesco cited McDuff as a key influence on his approach to jazz organ

Discography¹

79 as leader

40 as side player

Selected Songs

- Rock Candy (1963) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ILkFCavQGrc>
 - Red Holloway – tenor saxophone
 - George Benson – guitar
 - Joe Dukes – drums
- Unknown (1964) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ivYFzlapYTA>
 - Red Holloway – tenor saxophone
 - George Benson – guitar
 - Joe Dukes – drums?

- note bass line in left hand plus pedals

Ray Brown (10/13/1926 - 07/02/2002)

- American jazz double bassist
- born in Pittsburgh, PA
- took piano lessons as a child, considered the trombone, and settled on the bass
- early influence was Jimmy Blanton (Duke Ellington)
- He arrived in New York at the age of 20, met up with Hank Jones, with whom he had previously worked, and was introduced to Dizzy Gillespie, who was looking for a bass player. Gillespie hired Brown on the spot, and he soon played with such established musicians as Art Tatum and Charlie Parker.
- Brown played with the vibraphonist Milt Jackson, drummer Kenny Clarke, and pianist John Lewis in Dizzy's band (who with Percy Heath formed the Modern Jazz Quartet)
- He became acquainted with singer Ella Fitzgerald when she joined the Gillespie band as a special attraction for a tour of the south in 1947 they married that year
- from 1951-1965, Brown played with the Oscar Peterson Trio
- he began teaching in the early 1960s at the Advanced School of Contemporary Music in Toronto
- from 1974-1982, he performed with the L.A. Four (Laurindo Almeida, Bud Shank, and Shelly Manne/Jeff Hamilton)
- recorded albums with such diverse artists as Andre Previn, Kiri Te Kanawa, Jose Feliciano, Maria Muldaur, Linda Rondstadt, Lalo Schiffrin, Frank Sinatra, Bobbie Gentry, Dr. John, Elton John, Barry Manilow, Lionel Richie

Education

- took piano lessons as a child
- chose upright bass as his instrument in his high school orchestra; graduated in 1944

Awards

- won 3 Grammys (8 nominations)
- received an Honorary Doctorate of Music from Berklee College of Music in 1995
- and the Austrian Cross of Honour for Science and Art, 1st class in 2001
- inducted into the DownBeat Jazz Hall of Fame in 2003

Fun facts

- Brown's high school music teacher believed that he was a diligent student, as he took the bass home with him on weekends. Brown, however, was using the school bass in gigs
- Brown guested as a bass player on "Razor Boy" on Steely Dan's *Countdown to Ecstasy* album
- Diana Krall moved to L.A. to study under Brown (and others)
- played on Elvis Costello's *King of America* album
- won his first Grammy for his composition "Gravy Waltz", later used as the theme song for *The Steve Allen Show*

Discography¹

70 as leader

231 as side player

Selected Songs

- Lady Be Good (1992) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hg5YU3HB7JA>
 - Gene Harris (piano)
 - Jeff Hamilton (drums)
 - James Morrison (trumpet, trombone, euphonium)
 - note full tone of bass
- You Look Good to Me (1977) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aF1wnGoCX9A>
 - Oscar Peterson - piano
 - Bobby Durham - drums
- Birks' Works (1981) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wwBq1rxuP-w>
 - Dizzy Gillespie - trumpet

Jimmy Heath (10/25/1926 - 01/19/2020)

- American jazz saxophonist, composer, arranger, and big band leader
- born in Philadelphia, PA
- brother of bassist Percy Heath and drummer Albert Heath
- born in Philadelphia; father played clarinet and mother sang in church choir; sister played piano
- started on alto saxophone - later switched to tenor
- In 1946, he formed his own band that included John Coltrane, Benny Golson, and Ray Bryant. Charlie Parker and Max Roach sat in on one occasion
- The band dissolved in 1949 so that Heath could join Dizzy Gillespie's band
- While in prison (for selling heroin), he composed most of the Chet Baker and Art Pepper album *Playboys* (1956). He was released early, on May 21, 1959, and remained clean for the rest of his life
- He briefly joined Miles Davis's group in 1959, replacing Coltrane, and also worked with Kenny Dorham and Gil Evans.
- During the 1960s, he frequently worked with Milt Jackson and Art Farmer
- In 1975, he and his brothers formed the Heath Brothers, featuring pianist Stanley Cowell
- in the 1980s, Heath joined the faculty of the Aaron Copland School of Music the City University of New York, leading the creation of the Jazz Program and attracted prominent musicians to the campus.
- He served on the board of the Louis Armstrong Archives on campus and the restoration and management of the Louis and Lucille Armstrong Residence in Corona, Queens, near his own home
- Many of his compositions have become jazz standards
- He also composed suites and string quartets as well as a symphony
- In 2010 his autobiography *I Walked With Giants* was published (Heath stood 5 feet, 3 inches)

Education

- took music lessons and played in his high school marching band
- attended Walter George Smith School in South Philadelphia and graduated from Williston Industrial School in Wilmington North Carolina in 1943
- became professor of music at the Aaron Copland School of Music at Queens College in 1987

Awards

- named an NEA Jazz Master in 2003
- received Life Achievement Award from the Jazz Foundation of America
- was awarded 3 honorary doctorate degrees (one from Juilliard)
- nominated for 3 Grammys

Fun facts

- got his nickname "Little Bird" since he was so influenced by Charlie Parker
- rejected from WWII draft based on his low weight
- While playing in a jazz concert at the White House, then-President Bill Clinton borrowed his saxophone for one number

Discography¹

22 as leader

66 as side player

Selected Songs

- For Minors Only (1975): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rHLwiaOEy0o>
 - Barry Harris - piano
 - Sam Jones - bass
 - Billy Higgins - drums
- New Picture (2014): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rg_JcWgiu3o
 - Thelonious Monk International Jazz Competition winners:
 - Melissa Aldana - saxophone
 - Chris Pattishall - piano
 - Russell Hall - bass
 - Jamison Ross - drums
- Gingerbread Boy (1964): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=219uGHGdxzc>
 - Kenny Burrell - guitar
 - Wynton Kelly - piano
 - Paul Chambers - bass
 - Albert Heath - drums
 - Played in Tucson with TJI

Lou Donaldson (11/01/1926 - 11/09/2024)

- American jazz alto saxophonist
- born in Badin, NC
- enlisted in the U.S. Navy during World War II and was trained at the Great Lakes bases in Chicago where he was introduced to bop music in the lively club scene, playing with Clark Terry
- took up clarinet at 15, musical training in Navy, more at Darrow Institute of Music
- first jazz recordings were with bop musicians Milt Jackson and Thelonious Monk; he later played with trumpeter Blue Mitchell, pianist Horace Silver, and drummer Art Blakey. In 1953, he also recorded sessions with the trumpeter Clifford Brown, and with Philly Joe Jones. He was a member of Art Blakey's Quintet for the hard bop recording sessions at February 21, 1954, which would yield the *A Night at Birdland* album (considered a cornerstone of hard bop)
- best known for his soulful, bluesy approach to playing the alto saxophone, although in his formative years, he was heavily influenced by Charlie Parker
- helped define the soul jazz genre, notably with organist Jimmy Smith

Education

- mother was a music teacher, music director and concert pianist who introduced him to the clarinet
- attended North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University; received B.S. in 1948

Awards

- honorary doctorate from North Carolina A&T in 1983
- inducted into the International Jazz Hall of Fame in 1996
- inducted into the North Carolina Music Hall of Fame in 2012
- named a NEA Jazz Master in 2012
- Jazz at Lincoln Center Ertegun Jazz Hall of Fame in 2024

Fun Facts

- his mother was a music teacher and started him on piano; he had the ability to memorize the lessons by ear
- wrote a thesis in 1948 on "The Change from Swing to Bebop"
- The hit song 'Alligator Bogaloo' was improvised in the studio as a filler track but became one of his most popular recordings.
- helped launch Grant Green's career
- Donaldson was affectionately known as 'Sweet Papa Lou' for his warm personality and showmanship.

Discography¹

60 as leader/co-leader

21 as side player

Selected Songs

- Alligator Bogaloo (?): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1R-UMpckUZQ>
 - Lonnie Liston Smith - organ
 - Fukushi Tainaka - drums
- Blues Walk (1985): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=thlbnAP19cl>
 - Jimmy Smith - organ
 - Kenny Burrell - guitar
 - Grady Tate - drums

Tony Bennett (08/03/1926 - 07/21/2023)

- American jazz and traditional pop singer
- born in New York City, NY
- born Anthony Dominick Benedetto
- grew up listening to Al Jolson, Eddie Cantor, Judy Garland, and Bing Crosby as well as jazz artists such as Louis Armstrong, Jack Teagarden, and Joe Venuti.
- fought in WWII infantry in Europe
- taught and used *bel canto*² singing discipline which allowed his voice to last for such a long career
- Pearl Bailey recognized his talent and invited him to open for her in 1949; Bob Hope saw him and took him on the road and shortened his name to Tony Bennett
- first #1 pop song was *Because of You* (1951), produced by Mitch Miller and arranged by Percy Faith
- His recording of *Blue Velvet* (also a Mitch/Faith work) attracted screaming teenage fans at the Paramount Theater in New York (where Bennett did seven shows a day, starting at 10:30 am)
- another #1 hit was *Rags to Riches* (1953), an up-tempo big band song
- hosted an NBC Saturday night television variety show, *The Tony Bennett Show*, as a summer replacement for *The Perry Como Show*.

- started leaning toward jazz in 1955 and resulted in the 1957 album *The Beat of My Heart*, featuring Herbie Mann and Nat Adderley, Art Blakey, Jo Jones, and Chico Hamilton
- was the first male pop vocalist to sing with Count Basie; they made two albums in 1959 with "Chicago" being one of the standout songs
- signature song was *I Left My Heart in San Francisco* (1962) [a decade-old but little-known song originally written for an opera singer]
- career took a downturn during the rock and bounced from label to label; he started his own record company "improv" and had successes with 2 albums with Bill Evans but foundered in 1977
- son Danny had a good head for business and became Tony's manager and guided him through a comeback in the late 80s and 90s, using his same appearance singing style, musical accompaniment, and song choices to attract a new, young audience
- This reached its height with Bennett's appearance in 1994 on *MTV Unplugged* with the resulting *MTV Unplugged: Tony Bennett* album going platinum and yielded Grammys for "Best Traditional Pop Vocal Performance" and "Album of the Year"
- 2014 album *Cheek to Cheek* with Lady Gaga debuted at #1 on the Billboard charts, extending the 88-year-old's record for the oldest artist to do so
- continued to tour and produce albums until 2021
- sold more than 50 million records worldwide and earned a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.
- founded the Frank Sinatra School of the Arts in Queens

Education

- attended New York's School of Industrial Art where he studied painting and music[
- studied at the American Theatre Wing (nonprofit supporting theatre education) on the GI Bill

Awards

- received 19 Grammy Awards (41 nominations)
- two Primetime Emmy Awards.
- inducted into the Big Band and Jazz Hall of Fame in 1997
- awarded the Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award in 2001
- received a lifetime achievement award from the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) in 2002
- named a Kennedy Center Honoree in 2005
- 1960 - earned a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.
- named a NEA Jazz Master in 2006, plus numerous other awards

Fun Facts

- at age 10 he performed at the opening of the Triborough Bridge, standing next to Mayor Fiorello La Guardia who patted him on the head
- in October 1962 he sang on the initial broadcast of *The Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson*
- a strong support of the Civil Rights Movement, he participated in the 1965 Selma to Montgomery marches.
- his sons Danny and Dae had a band called *Quacky Duck and His Barnyard Friends*
- performed on the final day of a mud-soaked Glastonbury Festival in 1998 wearing an immaculate suit and tie with his whole set consisting of songs about the weather
- guest-mentored on American Idol season 6 and performed during its finale
- in 2011, Columbia released *Tony Bennett – The Complete Collection*, a 73-CD plus 3-DVD set (although not absolutely "complete")

- broke the individual record for the longest span of top-10 albums on the Billboard 200 chart for any living artist (1962 - 2021 with *Love for Sale* – also with Lady Gaga)
- broke the Guinness World Record for the oldest person to release an album of new material at the age of 95 years and 60 days.
- also had success as a painter, done under his real name of Anthony Benedetto, or just Benedetto
- in an interview for Life magazine in 1965, Frank Sinatra said: "For my money, Tony Bennett is the best singer in the business."

²*bel canto* is italian for beautiful singing; the exact meaning is widely debated but has to do with the physical methods of producing sound, breathing, shaping vowels, tone, etc.

Discography¹

albums: 109

singles: 56

Selected Songs

- Stranger in Paradise (1954): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YNDfEYMXBZ8>
- The Good Life (1994): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zq0LN8rWRno>
- The Way You Look Tonight (2015): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hb9awS1RRL4>
 - Bill Charlap - piano
- I Left My Heart In San Francisco (1963): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ayelb6WZ9g>
 - Judy Garland Show

Miles Davis (05/05/1926 - 09/28/1991)

- American trumpeter, bandleader and composer
- born in Alton, IL
- got his first trumpet at age 9 and by age 13 was playing with local bands
- played with a "who's who" of jazz musicians and formed bands of elite players from the 1940s until the end of his career
 - at 19, played with Billy Eckstine's band that included Art Blakey, Dizzy Gillespie, and Charlie Parker
 - in 1945, he replaced Dizzy Gillespie in Charlie Parker's bebop quintet
 - created in 1955 his "First Great Quintet" with Sonny Rollins, Red Garland, Paul Chambers, and Philly Joe Jones (Rollins -> John Coltrane, Jones -> Jimmy Cobb, Garland -> Bill Evans -> Wynton Kelly; added Cannonball Adderley)
 - 1963-1968 - Second Quintet - George Coleman, Ron Carter -> Dave Holland, Victor Feldman, Frank Butler (Feldman -> Herbie Hancock -> Chick Corea, Butler -> Tony Williams, Coleman -> Sam Rivers -> Wayne Shorter)
 - 1968-1975 - *In a Silent Way*, *Bitches Brew* included Shorter, Hancock, Holland, Corea, Joe Zawinul, John McLaughlin, Jack DeJohnette, Bennie Maupin, Airto Moreira, Keith Jarrett, Sonny Sharrock, Billy Cobham, Leon "Ngudu" Cancler, James Mtume, Don Alias, Lonnie Liston Smith, Badal Roy, Khalil Balakrishna, Al Foster, Larry Coryell, Marcus Miller, John Scofield
- took a hiatus from 1975-1980 due to physical ailments and alcohol/drug use
- 1980-1985 - staged a comeback in a variety of formats
- 1986-1991 - played with some current bands (e.g., Prince, Toto) as well as pursuing his own path with several new albums
- one of the most influential and acclaimed figures in the history of jazz and 20th-century music; at the forefront of several major stylistic developments in jazz, including bebop, cool jazz, hard bop, third stream, modal jazz, post-bop, avant-garde jazz, and jazz fusion

- created his Nonet in 1948, which included atypical modern jazz instruments such as French horn and tuba, leading to a thickly textured, almost orchestral sound
 - in the mid- to late-1950s, moved from bebop to more spacious and relaxed phrasing as well as developing his sound with the Harmon mute
 - collaborated with Gil Evans from 1957-1963 on 5 albums, including *Porgy and Bess* and *Sketches of Spain* (Rodrigo, de Falla)
 - 1959 - *Kind of Blue*
 - 1966-1968 saw the transition to electric bass, electric piano and electric guitar on some tracks, pointing the way to the fusion phase of Davis's career.
 - introduced to music of Karlheinz Stockhausen in 1972, influencing him to create "a lot of mood changes—heavy, dark, intense—definitely space music"
 - In 2019, *Kind of Blue* achieved 5× platinum certification from the Recording Industry Association of America for sales of more than five million copies in the US, making it one of the most successful jazz albums in history.[96] In 2009, the US House of Representatives passed a resolution that honored it as a national treasure.
 - multiple documentaries and feature films have been made about Davis
-
- **bebop** - a style developed in the early to mid-1940s characterized by a fast tempo, complex chord progressions—with rapid chord changes, changes of key, and substitute chords—along with virtuosic improvisation based on a combination of harmonic structure, scales, and occasional references to the melody [see Charlie Parker & Dizzy Gillespie]
 - **cool jazz** - a style inspired by bebop and big band that arose after World War II - characterized by relaxed tempos and a lighter tone than that used in bebop. Cool jazz often employs formal arrangements and incorporates elements of classical music [see Chet Baker, Dave Brubeck]
 - **hard bop** - an extension of bebop starting in the mid-1950s that incorporated influences from rhythm and blues, gospel music, and blues, especially in saxophone and piano playing [see Horace Silver, Charles Mingus]
 - **modal jazz** - makes use of musical modes, often modulating among them to accompany the chords instead of relying on one tonal center used across the piece [see *Kind of Blue* by Miles Davis]
 - **third stream** - a fusion of jazz and classical music where improvisation is a vital component (see *Sketches of Spain* by Gil Evans & Miles Davis)
 - **post bop** - vague term that more defines what a style isn't: not hard bop or modal or avant-garde, etc.; some say it is represented by small combos with a slower harmonic rhythm than bop and unusual harmonic progressions (and more)
 - **avant-garde jazz** - a style of music and improvisation that combines avant-garde art music and composition with jazz. It originated in the early 1950s and developed through the late 1960s. Free Jazz came out of avant-garde jazz but avant-garde jazz is either fully or partially composed. [see Anthony Braxton]
 - **jazz fusion** -aka jazz rock, jazz-rock fusion, or simply fusion) is a genre that developed in the late 1960s when musicians combined jazz harmony and improvisation with rock music, funk, and rhythm and blues. Electric guitars and basses, amplifiers, and keyboard instruments (including electric pianos and organs) that were popular in rock began to be used by jazz musicians, particularly those who had grown up listening to rock and roll [see Larry Coryell, *In a Silent Way* by Miles Davis]
-
- Recordings demonstrating different styles:
 - *Birth of the Cool* in 1949-1950 (cool jazz)
 - *Walkin'* in 1954 (hard bop)
 - *Kind of Blue* in 1959 (modal jazz)
 - *Sketches of Spain* in 1960 with arranger Gil Evans (third stream)
 - *E.S.P.* in 1965 (post bop)
 - *In a Silent Way* in 1969 (jazz fusion)
 - *On the Corner* in 1972 (avant garde) [Miles described it as Stockhausen + funk + Ornette Coleman]

Education

- initial music studies were with local trumpeter Elwood Buchanan
- studied music and joined the marching band at East St. Louis Lincoln High School
- briefly attended Juilliard School of Music

Awards

- since 1960, he has been awarded eight Grammy Awards (32 nominations), a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award and three Grammy Hall of Fame Awards
- won DownBeat award for best trumpeter 3 times; inducted into DownBeat Jazz Hall of Fame in 1962
- National Recording Registry: *Kind of Blue* (2002), *Bitches Brew* (2025)
 - Selected in 2002 as part of the registry's inaugural class. It remains the best-selling jazz record of all time and is celebrated for pioneering the modal jazz movement
- got Hollywood Walk of Fame star in 1998
- inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2006
- received an honorary doctorate from the New England Conservatory in 1986
- knighted as the Chevalier of the Legion of Honour in 1991
 - by French Culture Minister, Jack Lang, who called him "the Picasso of Jazz."
- In 2009, the US House of Representatives passed a resolution that honored it as a national treasure
- commemorative stamps were issued by the USPS in 2012

Fun Facts

- his mother wanted him to study piano or violin
- he took lessons from several teachers, including the principal trumpeter of the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra
- studied at Julliard, then dropped out to perform full-time
- in 1957, recorded the soundtrack to *Ascenseur pour l'échafaud* (Elevator to the Gallows) directed by Louis Malle and starring Jeanne Moreau
- at age 30, revealed offers he had received to teach at Harvard University and be a musical director at a record label
- played at the 1970 Isle of Wight festival before estimated 600,000 people
- in 1971, released soundtrack for *Jack Johnson* (boxer); later created soundtracks for 4 other films
- *You're Under Arrest*, released in 1985 included cover versions *Time After Time* by Cyndi Lauper and Michael Jackson's *Human Nature*; Davis collaborated with Prince on a song titled *Can I Play With U*, which went unreleased until 2020
- In 1988, Davis had a small part as a street musician in the Christmas comedy film *Scrooged* starring Bill Murray

Discography¹

61 studio albums

39 live albums

46 compilations

27 box sets

4 soundtracks

57 singles

Selected Songs

- Boplicity (cool jazz, 1949-1950) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HLzqjmoZZAc>
 - J. J. Johnson - trombone
 - Sandy Siegelstein - French horn
 - Bill Barber - tuba
 - Lee Konitz - alto saxophone
 - Gerry Mulligan - baritone saxophone
 - John Lewis - piano
 - Nelson Boyd - bass
 - Kenny Clarke - drums

- Walkin' (hard bop, 1957) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WoCKIFJWbqA>
 - Lucky Thompson – tenor saxophone
 - J. J. Johnson – trombone
 - Horace Silver – piano
 - Percy Heath – bass
 - Kenny Clarke – drums
- So What (modal, 1959) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zqNTItOGh5c>
 - Julian "Cannonball" Adderley – alto saxophone
 - John Coltrane – tenor saxophone
 - Bill Evans – piano
 - Paul Chambers – double bass
 - Jimmy Cobb – drums
- Concierto de Aranjuez – Adagio (Third Stream, 1960): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2cscpJisU6k>
 - Gil Evans – arranger, conductor
- Footprints (post bop, 1966): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pxb7pNXJvng>
 - Wayne Shorter – tenor saxophone
 - Herbie Hancock – piano
 - Ron Carter – double bass
 - Tony Williams – drums
- Pharoah's Dance (Electric/Fusion, 1970): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WtORTuLJw7o>
 - Wayne Shorter – soprano saxophone
 - Bennie Maupin – bass clarinet
 - Joe Zawinul – electric piano (left)
 - Larry Young – electric piano (center)
 - Chick Corea – electric piano (right)
 - John McLaughlin – electric guitar
 - Dave Holland – bass
 - Harvey Brooks – electric bass
 - Lenny White – drum set (left)
 - Jack DeJohnette – drum set (right)
 - Don Alias – congas
 - Juma Santos (credited as "Jim Riley") – shaker
- ~3:45
- or
- In a Silent Way (1969): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8bdBONxS-Es>
 - Wayne Shorter – soprano saxophone
 - John McLaughlin – electric guitar
 - Chick Corea – electric piano
 - Herbie Hancock – electric piano
 - Joe Zawinul – electric piano, organ
 - Dave Holland – double bass
 - Tony Williams – drums
- ~3:45-4:30 (transition from slow to fast)

John Coltrane (09/23/1926 - 07/17/1967)

- American jazz saxophonist, bandleader, and composer
- born in Hamlet, NC
 - died of liver cancer, although there is speculation that this was caused by hepatitis from heroin use and/or alcoholism
- played clarinet and alto horn in a community band
- family moved to Philadelphia after high school, immersing himself in local jazz scene
- received his first saxophone, an alto, on his 17th birthday

- served in the Navy toward the end of WWII
- influenced by Lester Young, Johnny Hodges, and Charlie Parker
- joined Jimmy Heath's band in 1946, then moved to Eddie "Cleanhead" Vinson's band - switching to tenor
- played with idol Charlie Parker and was a member of bands led by Dizzy Gillespie, Earl Bostic, and Johnny Hodges
- In 1955, Coltrane married Naima (née Juanita Grubbs). Naima Coltrane, a Muslim convert, heavily influenced his spirituality
 - play Naima, sometimes said to be his favorite composition
- played with Miles Davis's "First Great Quintet" in 1955-1957, then played briefly with Thelonious Monk before returning to the Davis group
- 1957 - the descriptive "sheets of sound" was used to describe Coltrane's style
 - His playing was compressed, with rapid runs cascading in very many notes per minute. Coltrane recalled, "I found that there were a certain number of chord progressions to play in a given time, and sometimes what I played didn't work out in eighth notes, sixteenth notes, or triplets. I had to put the notes in uneven groups like fives and sevens in order to get them all in."
- 1960 - recorded *Giant Steps* album - the song is generally considered to have one of the most difficult chord progressions of any widely played jazz piece
 - personnel: Cedar Walton, Paul Chambers, Lex Humphries, Tommy Flanagan, Art Taylor, Wynton Kelly, Jimmy Cobb
- club dates included members: Steve Kuhn, Pete La Roca, Billy Higgins, pianist McCoy Tyner, Steve Davis, and Elvin Jones
 - Tyner had been a friend for years
- 1961 - *My Favorite Things* was first album recorded by this band and Coltrane's first album on soprano
 - had Tyner, Steve Davis and Elvin Jones
- later in 1961, Coltrane moved to Impulse! records as Reggie Workman replaced Steve Davis and Eric Dolphy was added as 2nd horn
- residence at the Village Vanguard exhibited his most experimental music to date, influenced by Indian ragas, modal jazz, and free jazz
- critics were divided on this new direction but Coltrane was determined to fully express himself
- in 1962, Jimmy Garrison replaced Workman forming what was known as the "Classic Quartet", whose style was searching, spiritually driven
- collaborated with Duke Ellington and Johnny Hartman
-
- The Classic Quartet's best-selling album, *A Love Supreme*, is a four-part suite that is an ode to Coltrane's faith in and love for God.
 - These spiritual concerns characterized much of Coltrane's composing and playing from this point onward — as can be seen from album titles such as *Ascension*, *Om*, and *Meditations*. The fourth movement of *A Love Supreme*, "Psalm", is a musical setting for an original poem to God written by Coltrane, printed in the album's liner notes.
- from 1965 until his death, he became more interested in the avant-garde music of Ornette Coleman, Albert Ayler, and Sun Ra - and peripherally Gary Peacock, Paul Bley, Cecil Taylor, and Archie Shepp
- influenced Impulse! to become a leading free jazz label
- 1965 showed Coltrane's playing becoming more abstract, incorporating devices like multiphonics, use of overtones, and playing in the altissimo register while his band played with increasing freedom
 - multiphonics - producing more than one tone at once
 - Overtones on the saxophone refer to the higher frequencies that sound alongside the fundamental note being played. Practicing overtones is essential for developing a richer tone and improving control in the high register
 - Saxophone altissimo generally consists of the notes above the keyed range. Some instruments are keyed to a written high F, and some to F#. Altissimo is usually produced by using a combination of special fingerings

and voicing techniques. These can include air stream, tongue, throat and embouchure variations to disturb the fundamental of a note, which results in one of the higher overtones dominating.

- Coltrane's spiritual journey was interwoven with his investigation of world music. He believed in not only a universal musical structure that transcended ethnic distinctions, but also being able to harness the mystical language of music itself. His study of Indian music led him to believe that certain sounds and scales could "produce specific emotional meanings".
- other musicians he played with: Pharoah Sanders, Freddie Hubbard, Rashied Ali, Alice Coltrane
- among the most influential and acclaimed figures in the history of jazz and 20th-century music
- helped pioneer the use of modes and was at the forefront of free jazz
-
- Over the course of his career, Coltrane's music took on an increasingly spiritual dimension, as exemplified on his most acclaimed album *A Love Supreme* (1965) and others. Decades after his death, Coltrane remains influential, and he has received numerous posthumous awards and was canonized by the African Orthodox Church
 - After Coltrane's death, a congregation called the Yardbird Temple in San Francisco began worshipping him as God incarnate.[115] The group was named after Charlie "Yardbird" Parker, whom they equated to John the Baptist.[115] The congregation became affiliated with the African Orthodox Church; this involved changing Coltrane's status from a god to a saint.[115] The resultant St. John Coltrane African Orthodox Church in San Francisco is the only African Orthodox church that incorporates Coltrane's music and his lyrics as prayers in its liturgy

Education

- joined the community band and later the band at his high school, William Penn High School
- used the GI Bill to enroll at the Granoff School of Music, studying music theory and taking saxophone lessons
- took saxophone performance lessons at the Ornstein School of Music

Awards

- American Campaign Medal, Asiatic–Pacific Campaign Medal, and the World War II Victory Medal
- National Recording Registry: *Giant Steps* (2004), *A Love Supreme* (2015), *Kind of Blue* (with Miles Davis - 2002)
- won Grammy (eight nominations) in 1982
 - for his life's work
- recognized with Pulitzer Prize Special Citation in 2007
- inducted into DownBeat Jazz Hall of Fame in 1965
- has received numerous posthumous awards and was canonized by the African Orthodox Church
-

Fun Facts

- Coltrane became fanatical about practicing and developing his craft, practicing "25 hours a day" according to Jimmy Heath. Heath recalls an incident in a hotel in San Francisco when after a complaint was issued, Coltrane took the horn out of his mouth and practiced fingering for a full hour.[30] Such was his dedication; it was common for him to fall asleep with the horn still in his mouth or practice a single note for hours on end
- had a deep interest in drums, leading to groups with 2 drummers and/or multiple percussionists; sometimes he had a spare set on stage and would play that himself
- In the liner notes of *A Love Supreme*, Coltrane stated that in 1957 he experienced "...a spiritual awakening..." that may have helped him overcome the heroin addiction and alcoholism

- his spiritual nature was open to different philosophies as he studied the Qur'an, the Bible, Kabbalah, astrology, Hinduism, Jiddu Krishnamurti, African history, the philosophical teachings of Plato and Aristotle, and Zen Buddhism
- created soundtrack for the film *The Cat in the Bag* (1964)

Discography¹

127 as leader

19 singles

72 as side player

Selected Songs

- Giant Steps (1960): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KwIC6B_dvW4
 - Tommy Flanagan – piano
 - Paul Chambers – bass
 - Art Taylor – drums
- My Favorite Things (1965): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ehYM_cg2DHI
 - McCoy Tyner - piano
 - Jimmy Garrison - bass
 - Elvin Jones - drums
- A Love Supreme - Resolution (1964): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hIZFqMR1cuM>
 - Acknowledgement, Resolution, Pursuance, Psalm
 - McCoy Tyner – piano
 - Jimmy Garrison – double bass
 - Elvin Jones – drums, gong, timpani

¹ Discography numbers are mostly from Wikipedia and are likely not complete